STATE OF NEW JERSEY • DEPARTMENT OF INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES • TRENTON

Who are the blind in New Jersey

A STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PERSONS
ON THE REGISTER OF THE STATE
COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND
DURING THE FISCAL YEAR
1934

PREPARED BY THE
DIVISION OF STATISTICS AND RESEARCH
STATE DEPARTMENT OF INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES

PUBLICATION 30 JANUARY 1936

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WHO ARE THE BLIND IN NEW JERSEY?

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WHO ARE THE BLIND IN NEW JERSEY?

INTRODUCTION

The State Commission for the Blind, an agency of the State Department of Institutions and Agencies, is the coordinating unit for the work for the blind and visually handicapped in New Jersey. Through it relief is granted to the needy blind, home teaching is provided in writing and raised type reading as well as in occupational and handcraft subjects, social and recreational activities are made available - and with its cooperation, special academic education is arranged in residential schools and schools of higher education, in public schools, and in the home when necessary. The prevention of blindness is an important feature of the work*.

As soon as the name of a blind or visually handicapped person is reported to the Commission, or as soon as he applies for assistance of any kind, the home teacher covering the territory in which he resides visits him, obtaining as much of his social history as possible. A medical report is obtained from the physician or clinic if he has not been diagnosed by an eye specialist. If inadequate eye examination is reported, every effort is put forth by a special investigator to see that the person is transferred to a place where adequate eye care may be had. His social, educational, recreational, and physical needs are noted and plans made for meeting his needs and wishes. The individual remains on the register while his residence is in New Jersey and contact is maintained with him.

*See "Service to the Blind in New Jersey", publication 28 of the Department of Institutions and Agencies, for more detailed description of functions.

This register, of the blind and of that group of persons who are neither blind nor sufficiently sighted to live independently in the community without special training or provision for their severe visual handicaps, is maintained that the Commission may be of maximum service. The register has been analyzed for the fiscal year 1934 that facts might be revealed about blindness which would make possible a more intelligent approach to the problem of prevention of blindness and to the question as to what type of program of education, training, occupation, and recreation would be of most use to the visually handicapped individuals.

The case folders of all the persons on the register were read* thoroughly and pertinent information transferred from them to file cards which are being used for statistical purposes and as permanent reference cards. Details were checked with the home teacher or special worker in charge of each case. The diagnoses and causes of blindness were ascertained from written medical reports in the folders, nearly all of them definite diagnoses by physicians.

The active cooperation of the American Foundation for the Blind and of the National Society for Prevention of Blindness, especially through Miss Evelyn C. McKay and Miss C. Edith Kerby of the respective organizations who were also members of the Committee on Statistics of the Blind, was invaluable in organizing the material for the survey. The routine details were carried out by workers supplied through the New Jersey Emergency Relief Administration. The general direction of the survey was in the hands of Helen E. Heyer, Research Assistant of the Department of Institutions and Agencies.

*See "A Statistical Survey of the Blind in New Jersey", in Outlook for the Blind, Vol. XXIX, June 1935.

SUMMARY FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

Number. 2589 persons were registered with the Commission in 1934, of whom 2131 were blind and 458 were "borderline" cases, sufficiently visually handicapped to need special attention.

Color. Of 2,131 cases of blindness, 264 or 12.4 per cent were Negroes. Of the whites, 72 per cent were native born and 28 per cent foreign born.

Sex. 55.5 per cent of the total were males.

Age at Loss of Sight. One-fifth of the blind were born sightless or lost their sight before they were five years old. One-sixth lost their sight between the ages of 5 and 24. Almost two-thirds were blind before they were fifty.

Present Age. 14 per cent were under 25 years; 40.9 per cent were between 25 and 59; 45.1 per cent were more than 60.

Causes of Blindness. Of those for whom the causes of blindness were known, infectious diseases (including ophthalmia neonatorum and syphilis) caused 41.3 per cent; industrial and non-industrial accidents 27.7 per cent; and congenital and hereditary conditions 20.9 per cent.

Diagnoses. Optic atrophy, cataract, and glaucoma, in that order, were reported as the diagnoses of 47.9 per cent of the cases.

WHAT IS BLINDNESS? HOW MANY BLIND ARE THERE IN NEW JERSEY?

In 1934 there were registered with the New Jersey Commission for the Blind, persons who were blind, or whose visual handicap was so great that special measures must be taken to prevent blindness, to the number of 2589.

This number included 2131 blind, of whom 1444 were totally blind* or could only distinguish light from darkness and 687 with visual perception varying from those who could perceive motion or the form of a hand at a distance of three feet to those who could read newspaper headlines but not ordinary print (smaller than 14 point). Most of the second group are as handicapped as the totally blind, for their methods of traveling, of earning a living, of social intercourse, and of gaining economic security are as limited.

For practical purposes, then, the blind include all persons with less than one-tenth vision in the better eye even when fitted with glasses. They cannot see at 20 feet what the normal eye sees at 200 feet. Persons in this group are so limited in choice of occupation as to be vocationally blind. Moreover, their handicap keeps them from full participation in the educational, employment, social, and recreational facilities of the community. Special opportunities must therefore be made available to them that their aptitudes and abilities may have the fullest possible development, resulting in lives of usefulness, success and happiness.

A third group of those on the register, numbering 458, may be classified as "borderline" or "prevention" cases. These include cases with high progressive myopia, cases with greatly restricted fields of vision or with temporary eye diseases, cases with vision not good enough for ordinary print, or those with only one remaining eye which needs protection. Some of these persons are temporarily blind for occupational purposes; others, chiefly children, need medical attention, or specially designed text books, lighting, and desks in the schools that will permit educational progress to the greatest extent possible at the same time preventing the development of more serious and permanent visual handicaps. The "borderline" persons have between one-tenth and two-sevenths vision. They are as a whole unable to read general newspaper type and have insufficient sight for use in an occupation or activity for which sight is essential.

*Groupings in accordance with the classification of the Committee on Statistics of the Blind.

Slightly more than half of the blind (55.5 per cent) were males. Negroes constituted 12.4 per cent of the total blind.

Among the 458 borderline cases, on the other hand, there were only 7.2 per cent Negroes.

General Classification and Color
of Persons on Register*

Classification	Total	White	Negro
Total	2589	2292	297
Blind	2131	1867	264
Totally blind	1444	1237	207
Partially blind	687	630	57
Borderline	458	425	33

*See appendix tables 1 and 2 for classification of blind by counties.

IS BLINDNESS PRIMARILY A HANDICAP OF THE AGED?

Age at Loss of Sight. Blindness frequently attacks children due to the prevalence of hereditary and congenital causes, and, in former years more than today, to ophthalmia neonatorum, infection in new born babies' eyes. One-sixth of the persons on the register had no sight when less than one year old. Another sixth became blind before they were twenty.

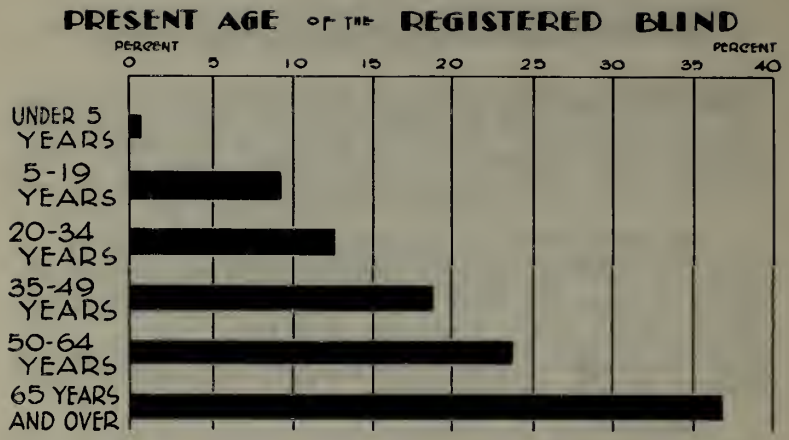
One-tenth became blind during old age (70 years of age and over) when resistance to systemic and degenerative diseases is low. In the intervening years, hazards of industry, accidents, eye strain due to poor lighting or to working or playing under unfavorable conditions, and the development of certain infectious diseases impaired the eyes of many, although apparently the danger of blindness is most acute in infancy and childhood.

Important to the rehabilitation program and to the prevention program are such factors as these:

Age at Loss of Sight

Age	Number	Per cent of stated cases
Total	2131	100.0
Under 1 year	329	16.4
1 - 4 years	83	4.1
5 - 9 years	101	5.0
10-14 years	83	4.1
15-19 years	68	3.4
20-29 years	172	8.6
30-39 years	219	10.9
40-49 years	249	12.4
50-59 years	265	13.3
60-69 years	242	12.1
70 years and over	193	9.7
Not stated	127	-

Present Age. Quite a different story is told by the analysis of the present age of the blind given below, which indicates that age alone would make many unemployable. A considerable number of the blind is in the period of life when special training is needed. The employable period of a blind person is shorter and opportunities for employment are scarce, especially for those blinded after childhood.



Employment Possibility of Registered Blind Based on Present Age

Present age	Employment possibility based on age group only	Number	Per cent of known ages
Total		2131	100.0
Under 5 years	Pre-school	11	0.5
5-19 years	School	188	9.0
20-34 years	Employable but needing vocational training and adjustment	256	12.2
35-49 years	Employable if trained	389	18.6
50-64 years	Possibly employable but opportunities limited by age	491	23.4
65 years and over	Probably unemployable	762	36.3
Not stated	-	34	-

The term "employment possibility" as used in the above table applies only in general and must be interpreted within strict limitations. Half of those in each group are women, many of whom, especially in the groups over 34, would not be working outside the home, even if sighted. Some have mental handicaps or additional physical handicaps. A substantial portion of those over 50 are so handicapped by sickness or age that they would be dependent even if sighted.

HOW DOES THE COMMISSION LEARN OF CASES OF BLINDNESS?

Sources of Referral. That the State Commission maintains a register of the blind and is prepared to serve the blind and to prevent blindness whenever possible is generally known throughout the state. Family welfare agencies, homes for the aged, almshouses, hospital and charitable institutions, health and social agencies both public and private, refer cases coming to their attention. Eye clinics and physicians, friends and neighbors report cases. Frequently the blind person himself appeals for relief, for medical attention, for home teaching, for employment or some other service. At sales of work by the blind, cases are frequently reported.

During the fiscal year 1935, 505 new cases were referred to the Commission, of whom 305 were blind and 200 borderline cases, this latter including 122 children in sight saving classes of the public schools.

Public agencies referred 120 of the new cases, specified sources being E.R.A., 55; county welfare boards, overseers of the poor and county adjusters, 19; health departments, 6; and the State Department of Institutions and Agencies, 24.

Private agencies referred 63 persons, of whom 29 were sent by hospitals and 17 by local agencies for the blind in New Jersey or in other states.

Application directly to the Commission was made by 45 visually handicapped persons and 88 were registered by relatives and friends. Twelve were reported by other blind persons, 17 by physicians, and 6 by other individuals. Schools registered 143, 122 of whom were in sight saving classes.

Reason for Referral. A large proportion of the new cases registered asked for relief. To these, the other services were explained and offered so that they might avail themselves of them, whether or not they were eligible for relief. Some were referred merely for registration purposes and general services. Others were seeking medical attention or educational aid.

Principal Service Requested for Persons Registering during 1935

Principal service requested	Number requesting
Total	505
Relief	167
Medical care	52
Education	45
Home instruction for adult blind	76
Vocational aid and reemployment	3
Institutional care	18
Social visits	8
Special recreation	3
Clear type book	1
Cane	1
Writing board	1
General care	2
Registration only*	128

*These included 102 of the children already registered in sight saving classes who needed no other contact with the Commission, and others who registered without asking for any special help.

Date of Registration. The register for 1934 represents 24 years of activity. It contains the names of 135 blind persons who were discovered in 1910, the first year of the Commission's existence. Of those on the register in the fiscal year 1934, half had been added during the last five years.

Year of Registration of Those on Register 1934

Calendar year of registration	Number still on register 1934
Total	2589
1934	139*
1933	259
1932	423
1931	273
1930	171
1925-1929	497
1920-1924	326
1915-1919	175
1910-1914	326

*Six months period January 1st - June 30th. 181 were registered July 1st-December 31, 1934

The varying periods covered by the registration indicate the importance of a long time program worked out to carry the blind over a series of years with developing interests for youth and old age.

HOW SOON DOES THE COMMISSION LEARN ABOUT BLIND PERSONS?

Age at First Contact. Although 20 per cent of the registered blind had lost their sight before they were five years old, only three per cent had been reported to the Commission at that age. The Commission thus had little opportunity to serve the pre-school blind child. One-third were more than 60 years of age when registered, but only 22 per cent of these had lost their sight after 60. Some of the lag in reporting cases is due to the fact that the Commission was organized only in 1910.

Age at First Contact and Age at Loss of Sight

Age group	Percent of specified age	
	At first contact	At loss of sight
All ages	100.0	100.0
Under 5 years	3.0	20.5
5 - 9 years	6.4	5.0
10-14 years	5.8	4.1
15-19 years	4.4	3.4
20-24 years	4.2	4.3
25-49 years	30.0	27.6
50-64 years	22.1	20.3
65 years and over	24.1	14.8

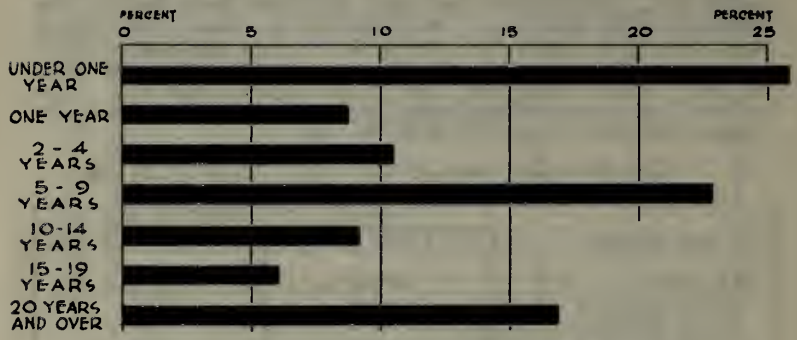
Length of Time Blind Before Contact with the Commission. Ninety per cent of the blind persons registering for the first time in 1935 in New Jersey had been blind more than a year. In Essex County, where there are special classes for the blind in the public schools, where the office of the Commission for the Blind is located, where there are many public and private agencies which refer cases, early contact, that is contact during the first year of blindness, is more frequent. Of 379 Essex County cases on the register in 1934, for whom the information was available, only one fourth had been reported to the Commission during the year of the onset of blindness, and one-fifth had not registered until after 15 or more years of blindness.

Length of Time Blind Before Contact with Commission
Essex County Cases on Register 1934

Years blind before contact	Number persons	Per cent distribution known cases
Total	388	100.0
Under 1 year	98	25.9
One year	33	8.7
2 - 4 years	40	10.5
5 - 9 years	87	23.0
10-14 years	34	9.0
15-19 years	23	6.0
20 years and over	64	16.9
Not stated	9	-

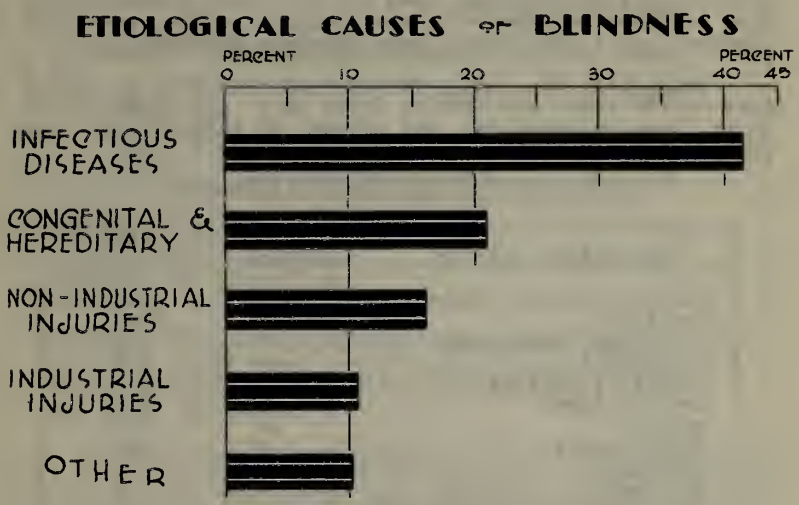
LENGTH OF TIME BLIND BEFORE CONTACT WITH COMMISSION

ESSEX COUNTY CASES ON REGISTER 1934



WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY CAUSES OF BLINDNESS?

Infections, accidents, and congenital and hereditary conditions were the most frequent etiological causes of blindness of the 1205 cases for whom this information was available.



Summary Etiological Classification of Causes of Blindness

Etiological Classification	Per cent
Total	100.0
Infectious diseases	41.3
Congenital and hereditary conditions (excluding syphilis)	20.9
Non-industrial injuries	17.0
Industrial injuries	10.7
Non-infectious systemic diseases	6.7
Brain tumors	2.7
Toxic poisoning	0.7

Infectious Diseases. Forty-one per cent of the blindness was attributable to infectious diseases, the most destructive single infection being syphilis. In more than 12 per cent of the cases syphilis was specified. In another 11 per cent, only the general term "infection" was given in the medical reports, although the individual and family histories clearly indicated venereal disease in many of the cases.

Ophthalmia neonatorum caused 8 per cent of the blindness, mostly among those born some years ago when prophylaxis of new born babies' eyes was not general. This infection has been reportable to the board of health since 1895 however, and a physician's care has been required.

Meningitis was the forerunner of blindness in 3 per cent of the cases and scarlet fever in 2 per cent. Trachoma, once so prevalent, was present in only 6/10 of one per cent of the cases.

Infectious Diseases Causing Blindness

Infectious disease	Number	Per cent of all cases
Total infectious diseases	495	41.3
Syphilis	147	12.2
Ophthalmia neonatorum	100	8.3
Meningitis	39	3.2
Infantile paralysis	6	0.5
Scarlet fever	24	2.0
Measles	12	1.0
Tuberculosis	8	0.7
Trachoma	7	0.6
Smallpox	7	0.6
Other infections specified	19	1.7
Infections not specified**	126	10.5

**Case histories indicate that a large proportion of these are undoubtedly due to venereal disease.

Congenital and Hereditary Conditions. One-fifth of the blindness was considered to be of hereditary or congenital origin, the terms being used by some of the ophthalmologists somewhat interchangeably and occasionally somewhat loosely. Cases so reported were mostly congenital cataracts, congenital glaucoma (megalophthalmos), retinitis pigmentosa, and developmental and motor anomalies.

Accidents. Industrial accidents resulted in permanent eye injury in 11 per cent of the cases (129 persons).

A large percentage occurred in chemical and steel industries and other factories and occupations having somewhat similar hazards. Burns, fumes, acid, and molten metal injured the eyes of 22 workers in this group. Boiler, mine and tunnel and other explosions caused the blindness of 15 persons. Blows on the head or directly to the eye affected 14 persons, among them truck drivers, auto mechanics, and pugilists or boxers. Bits of steel, sand, emery, lime, fatally entered the eyes of tool makers, razor grinders, iron and pottery workers, and laborers. A telephone lineman, an

electric contractor and a laundry worker were blinded by electric shock.

Numerous other types of industrial accidents have resulted in inflicting blindness upon their victims.

Accidents Causing Blindness

Type of injury	Number affected
All injuries	333
Non-industrial accidents - total	204
War	13
Explosives other than war - total	40
Fireworks	4
Firearms	15
Other explosives	21
Play or sport excluding explosives	18
Household activities excluding explosives	1
Street and traffic accidents	15
Birth injuries	14
Other injuries specified*	57
Injuries not specified	46
Industrial injuries - total	129

*Includes, without specifying during what type of activity, such items as piercing of eyes by sticks, forks, scissors, etc., injury by lye, acid, sand, and falls and blows.

The 204 non-industrial injury cases listed above represent varied activities, including play, sport and travel, war and birth. Many were definitely preventable being rather definitely the result of carelessness, thoughtlessness, or ignorance. In this group probably should be classed 14 birth injuries, including 7 instrument birth cases, 4 burns from silver nitrate, 3 labelled "carelessness of midwives"; 4 fireworks and 15 firearms accidents; and most of the 21 other explosions, including dynamite used in various ways, stump blasting, furnace, boiler, gasoline and stove explosions; most of the 11 automobile accidents and 4 trolley, train and motorcycle accidents; and a considerable percentage of those occurring during play or ordinary activities.

Shrapnel, bursting shells, mine explosions at sea, gassing and shell shock during the World War blinded 13 of those now registered with the Commission.

Non-infectious Systemic Diseases. In the group of non-infectious systemic diseases causing blindness (6.7 per cent of the total known cases) diabetes was responsible for the largest number, 2.3 per cent; vascular diseases for 1.7 per cent; nephritis for 1.3 per cent; and diseases of the central nervous system for 0.8 per cent.

WHAT PARTS OF THE EYE ARE MOST FREQUENTLY AFFECTED?

The Optic Nerve was injured in 426, or 22 per cent of the cases, mostly through atrophy. Syphilis, meningitis, brain tumors, vascular disease, and accidents were specified as the causes of the atrophy in almost half the cases. Atrophy was the end result in a number of the cases which occurred so long after the onset of the visual handicap that the etiological cause and the primary result or diagnoses could not be ascertained.

The Crystalline Lens was affected in 20.1 per cent (390) of the cases. Cataracts totalling 386 were attributable to congenital conditions, diabetes, accidents, syphilis, senility, and unknown causes.

Development Anomalies and Degenerative Changes of the Eyeball were next in frequency, being diagnosed in 264 or 13.6 per cent of the cases. These included 218 cases of disorganized globe or panophthalmitis, resulting almost entirely from industrial and non-industrial accidents. There were 20 cases of congenital glaucoma.

Glaucoma, an affection of the eyeball, the cause of which is unknown, was diagnosed in 236 cases, or 12.2 per cent of the total.

Diseases of the Choroid and Retina appeared in 234 blind persons with retinitis pigmentosa (usually congenital or hereditary) and detached retina (mostly traumatic) leading, with 52 cases each. Disseminated chorioretinitis, retinitis, choroiditis, and uveitis (the four mostly the result of infections although occasionally of diabetes, nephritis and congenital conditions and accidents, in descending order of importance) claimed 111 persons.

The 215 persons with Corneal Affections are mostly ophthalmia neonatorum cases with corneal ulcers, other ulceration and keratitis cases, and interstitial and not specified keratitis caused by syphilis and unspecified infections, and hereditary or congenital conditions.

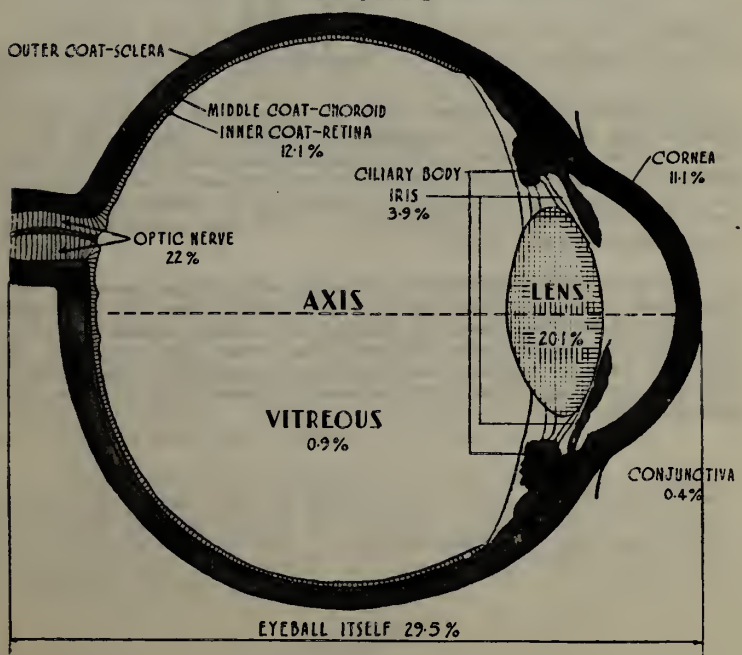
Iritis and Iridocyclitis are listed for 3.9 per cent of the diagnoses.

Diagnoses of Eye Conditions*

Part of eye affected or type of defect	Number	Per cent of reported diagnosis
Total	2131	100.0
Eyeball	572	29.5
Hypertension (glaucoma)	236	12.2
Refractive errors	50	2.6
Motor anomalies	22	1.1
Developmental anomalies and degenerative changes	264	13.6
Optic nerve	426	22.0
Crystalline lens (usually cataract)	390	20.1
Choroid and retina	234	12.1
Cornea	215	11.1
Iris and ciliary body	75	3.9
Vitreous humor	18	0.9
Conjunctiva	7	0.4
Miscellaneous and ill defined lesions	194	-

*See appendix table for detailed diagnoses related to etiological cause.

HORIZONTAL SECTION OF RIGHT EYEBALL SHOWING PARTS OF EYE AFFECTED IN BLIND PERSONS IN NEW JERSEY



ARE THERE ANY RACIAL OR NATIVITY GROUPS OUTSTANDING?

Twelve per cent of the persons registered are Negroes, although Negroes constitute only five per cent of the state's population. This difference may be due to the fact that the infections causing blindness are especially prevalent among the Negroes, and preventive measures at the time of birth, during childhood and adult life are not so well known. Emphasis on conditions affecting Negro health in general during the last few years may be expected in time to lessen blindness among that race. Certain counties especially have the problem to face: Atlantic has 43 per cent Negroes in the total blind registered; Essex, 20 per cent and Monmouth, 15 per cent. The smaller counties with the registered blind Negroes far exceeding the proportion of Negroes in the general population, include Cape May, Gloucester, Cumberland and Salem.

Color or Nativity of Blind on Register

Color or Nativity	Blind registered 1934		Per cent of nativity group in state's general population 1930
	Number	Per cent	
Total	2131	100.0	100.0
Native born white	1281	60.1	73.9
Foreign born white	496	23.3	20.9
White - nativity not stated	90	4.2	-
Negro	264	12.4	5.2

The New Jersey Commission is primarily serving those born in New Jersey or neighboring states. Almost 60 per cent of the registered native born blind were born in New Jersey; 25 per cent were born in New York and Pennsylvania; ten per cent were from the South Atlantic states; two per cent from the New England states, and the remainder from other geographical areas.

Half of the registered foreign born blind came either from Italy (26 per cent) or the British Isles (24 per cent) and one-third from Central Europe including Germany. More blind persons came from the British Isles than might be expected from the number in the state's general population from the British Isles, and somewhat fewer blind from central Europe.

County of Birth of Blind Foreign Born Whites

Country of birth	Blind registered 1934		Per cent of nativity group in state's general population, 1930
	Number	Per cent	
Total	496	100.0	100.0
British Isles	119	24.0	17.9
Scandinavia	13	2.6	3.3
France	8	1.6	1.2
Germany	87	17.6	13.4
Central Europe (except Germany)	73	14.7	22.9
Eastern Europe	31	6.3	9.4
Italy	130	26.2	22.6
Canada	6	1.2	2.0
West Indies including Cuba	3	0.6	0.3
Other	26	5.2	7.0

HAVE THE BLIND ADDITIONAL HANDICAPS?

Some of the blind whom the Commission assists have to adjust their living not only to visual handicaps, but to other handicaps as well. The teaching and employment problems of these are especially difficult. Signal success has been had in some cases with persons totally deaf and blind. There are many blind persons who are only partially deaf (173 registered as such)whose needs are great and for whom special care must be provided.Some of the older blind are also crippled or paralyzed (139 reported),their additional handicaps being traced frequently to the cause of lost sight.

The mentally handicapped blind (286) lessen the number of possible employables and present a special problem. Of the 183 feebleminded or epileptic,some are in state institutions where they are being taught by persons who understand and meet the needs of the double handicaps; others can be cared for outside of institutions if proper home conditions obtain. Some are definitely mentally diseased and in state hospitals; others are senile.

Among those listed above as having handicaps in addition to blindness are 80 persons who have definite physical handicaps (deafness, muteness,crippling conditions) as well as mental handicaps (feeblemindedness, epilepsy, mental disease and disorders. Little constructive work can be done for them.

IN WHAT INSTITUTIONS HAVE THE BLIND HAD CARE OR TRAINING?

The New Jersey Commission believes that the blind should live in the community and take part in all phases of community life possible. It has therefore advocated institutional care only when a given institution could render a special service not otherwise available. Residential schools and institutions for persons with additional handicaps have been advisable for some persons.

Residential Schools. One of the first laws (1873) passed in New Jersey in behalf of the blind provided that training be given them in residential schools. The State Commission, since its organization in 1910, has been responsible for this training, especially for children who do not live in or near communities where special classes are conducted in the public schools. Of the total 2131 registered, 268 have attended some residential school, most of them aided with New Jersey state funds. A few have had private aid and others attended residential schools before becoming residents of New Jersey.

The largest number (117) have gone to the New York Institute; the second largest number (93) to the Pennsylvania Institution. Perkins Institution in Massachusetts has had 25 of these New Jersey cases and the Maryland School for the Blind, four Negro children. Ten other schools are listed as having given training to 29 of the 268.

Schools for Higher Learning. The Commission is empowered by the Legislature to give special assistance in the form of partial tuition and grants for readers for persons who would benefit by higher education. In addition to many who have attended high school, 13 of the 2131 have attended universities and colleges with this financial aid.

Other Institutions. Institutions for the blind, including among others the two in New Jersey, Arthur Home for Blind Babies at Summit and St. Joseph's Home at Jersey City, have cared at one time or another for 109 of the 2131 blind in the state, although only 45 were under such care during the fiscal year 1934.

Almshouses have given refuge to 78; private homes for the aged to 28; and soldiers' homes to 22.

Institutional History. Almost 13 per cent of the registered blind were in institutions during 1934. Of these cases 47 had been in other institutions before entering the one in which they were resident in 1934. Twelve, for example, had started in the Arthur Home and were later sent to New York Institute or an institution for the feebleminded; several had records of residential schools for the blind followed by college training; others had gone from residential schools to homes for the blind or to institutions for the feebleminded when a mental handicap, in addition to the visual one, was discovered.

Institutional Record of All Persons
on Register During 1934

Type of institution	Number on register who have been in specified type of institution at some time
Training institutions	
Schools for the blind	268
Colleges and universities	13
Institutions for the blind	109
Institutions for aged	
Homes for the aged	28
Almshouses	78
Soldiers' homes	22
Institutions for mental conditions	
Hospitals for mental disease	46
Institutions for feebleminded	72
Institutions for epileptics	8
Other institutions	9

CAN THE BLIND READ?

One of the very first things a newly blinded person asks of his home teacher is "Will you teach me to read so that I can know what is going on in the world and so that I may entertain myself?" This the home teachers are very glad to do. They teach the reading of embossed types, typewriting, writing in long hand and in braille type, so that messages may be sent to blind and to sighted friends.

One-third of the registered blind read one or more of the three forms of embossed type, braille, Moon or New York point. Braille, the newer system which is used in its several combinations internationally, is read by 540 or 76 per cent of the total blind using embossed type of any kind. Moon is understood by 23 per cent and New York point by 12 per cent.

Embossed Types Used by Blind

Embossed type	Persons using
Total persons using	715
Braille only	476
Braille and New York point	24
Braille and Moon	32
Moon only	120
Moon and New York point	1
New York point only	54
Braille, Moon and New York point	8

One hundred of the 120 using Moon only are now more than 50 years of age. Half of them lost their sight when they were more than 50. In contrast 81 per cent of those using New York point only were under 15 years of age when they became blind and slightly more than half are between 25 and 49 with the remainder 50 and over.

ARE THERE ANY SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN OCCUPATIONS BEFORE AND AFTER BLINDNESS?

Occupational data concerning the blind are unsatisfactory because of the difficulty of grouping individual jobs in general classifications. Separate assignments in the same industry have varying occupational hazards even within the skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled groups. No uniform nomenclature has been evolved to distinguish between the women who are gainfully engaged in cooking and doing general housework in the homes of others and those whose occupation is to do the household tasks in their own homes, or direct servants to do them. The economic and social backgrounds of the two groups are, as a whole, sufficiently different to invalidate any conclusions that might be drawn from the figures.

Data were obtained however covering the occupations before blindness of 1272 of the 2131 blind and of the occupations after blindness of 1004. The former group excludes the larger number who were born blind or who lost their sight at too early an age to have any occupation and those for whom no record was available at the time of the survey. The latter group excludes the large number of those who have no definite occupation as well as those whose occupation is unknown.

Manufacturing and the mechanical trades were reported as the occupations before blindness of 213 or 17 per cent of those whose occupation was known. Laborers in all types of industry totalled 148. There were 357 variously designated as "housewife", "housework". An additional 107 were in the domestic-personal service classification which included cooks, waiters, porters and janitors, child's nurses, laundresses, barbers, innkeepers, etc.

Occupations before Blindness of Reported Cases

Occupations	Number
Total	1272
Manufacturing	213
Laborers	148
Building trades	85
Trade	83
Transportation - public service	89
Professional and semi-professional service	56
Clerical	44
Recreational	13
Agriculture	63
Fishing and forestry	4
Mining	10
Domestic and personal service (excluding housework)	107
Housework - housewives	357

Farmers and gardeners numbered 26 and clerical workers, including telephone operators, 8.

Many of the women who are blind continue to care for their own homes and do much of their own housework. Some are child's nurses, cooks, boarding house keepers. Among the domestic and personal service occupations of the blind are masseurs, restaurant workers, porters, and bootblacks.

That only 62 persons report the same occupation before and after blindness emphasizes the necessity of a program of reeducation of the blinded adult in accordance with his mental and other physical assets.

Approximately 40 per cent of the blind for whom any occupational data after blindness are recorded, have taken part in the Commission-sponsored activities including rug weaving, mop and brushmaking, chair caning, knitting, and sewing. The Commission has assisted a few to obtain selling agencies.

The 164 definitely engaged in trade included, among others,merchants (50), salesmen and canvassers (30), news stands and paper routes (28), peddlers and pushcart vendors (21),chicken and egg business (7), real estate and insurance (6).

The group of blind engaged in professional or semi-professional activities is specially interesting. It includes 23 teachers (6 of them music teachers), 15 musicians and 12 piano tuners,4 staff members of organizations for the blind, 6 braille transcribers, as well as a few writers, interpreters, entertainers, lawyers, ministers.

WHAT HAS THE COMMISSION DONE FOR THE REGISTERED BLIND?

The purpose of the Commission, as has already been stated, briefly, is to assist the blind in any way possible educationally, vocationally, medically, financially, and socially and to help them play their parts in the life of the community. In carrying out this program, it works actively with public and private social agencies,with service and fraternal organizations, women's groups, clubs formed by the blind themselves in different sections of the state, and with socially minded individuals, hospitals,eye clinics and ophthalmologists. Eye operations requiring hospitalization are frequently necessary which cannot be financed by the Commission itself. Workers of the Commission are able to arrange for adequate care of such cases through specialists who volunteer their services,hospitals which open their operating rooms and wards,and private individuals or groups of lay persons who assume responsibility for the accompanying unavoidable expenses. If glasses are prescribed, appeal is made to overseers of the poor, Emergency Relief Administration offices, or private agencies. Often special rates are obtained through the eye clinics. Clients are referred to the eye clinics of the general hospitals for examinations and treatment. Sometimes special arrangements are made for the individual to be seen in the private office of an oculist.

County or city associations of the blind, the Blind Men's Club,and the recreation committee of the Commission's Board of Managers are assisted by private local groups to schedule entertainments. Special passes admitting a blind person and companion are available for certain moving picture theatres. It is the Commission's privilege to bring together the blind who need companionship and recreation and the groups who are able and willing to provide it.

The table on the following page indicates to some extent the services which the Commission itself has given those on the register. It does not include the many cooperative services performed entirely by outside agencies, but does include some of those in which the Commission has cooperated. It excludes efforts made by the Commission to organize special classes in the public schools and arrangements made for children to attend those classes. It does list the distinct services of home teaching, sales, social visiting, higher education, relief and the like which are the definite tasks of the Commission.

Many persons on the register have received fairly comprehensive series of services, starting, perhaps, with a class for the blind in a public school, and progressing through high school and college or vocational school with medical care as needed. Many who received home teaching later sell articles through the Commission or take part in recreational programs. A large percentage of all who are registered are recorded as receiving"other services."These include cases where the only service has been a referral to another agency for relief or special action,cases in which

the Commission has attempted medical, educational, or social aid which has been refused or which the Commission has not succeeded in rendering for one reason or another, cases in which the applicant has asked for some specific service such as assistance in finding a site for a newsstand or requesting some special instruction.

Some persons on the register have no need for the Commission. They are economically secure and are fortunate enough to have friends who will give them understanding companionship, and private teachers who can give them the educational background, to enjoy many of the pleasures of the sighted and engage in many of their vocational, avocational, or social activities.

Lessons in braille, in writing, in sewing, knitting or other handcrafts have been given to 911 persons or 43 per cent of the blind on the register. One-sixth of the blind have at some time sold articles through the Commission and one-eleventh have been assisted in finding employment. Twenty-two per cent have received relief.

Services Reported as Rendered to the Blind from time of Registration through 1934

Service	Receiving specified service	
	Number	Per cent
Relief	478	22.4
Home teaching	911	42.7
Sales	357	16.8
Employment	190	8.9
Recreation	225	10.6
Social visits	1034	48.5
Medical care	385	18.1
Residential school	140	6.6
High school	39	1.8
College or vocational school	34	1.6
Correspondence only	63	3.0
Other services	995	46.7

WHAT MODERN AIDS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE BLIND?

The blind are not a homogeneous group. They differ among themselves in temperament, taste, ability and personality as do the seeing and therefore need a great variety of educational, cultural, and recreational interests to help them lead active normal lives. Contact with congenial persons, participation in community activities, knowledge of current events, an understanding of trends in modern thought, knowledge of what is being read and talked about and of tales that will bring them sheer enjoyment and take them out of themselves - all are of vital importance to the fullest development of the blind person's personality, and his complete adjustment to his environment.

The senses of hearing and touch must give to the blind what they obtain of the impressions the sighted receive through the eye. For many years there has been a continued extension and perfection in the use of embossed type that enables the blind to learn to read it more easily. The home teachers of the Commission for the Blind teach the blind to read embossed type and to write it. More and more magazines and books are translated into braille, by commercial concerns, by agencies for the blind, by private charitable agencies (notably the Red Cross) and by individuals or groups of individuals (members of the Junior Leagues and Women's Clubs) who undertake the definite service.

At best, braille is slow; braille books are extremely expensive, awkward to handle and too cumbersome to store in one's home or to send easily through the mail. In New Jersey as in other states, not more than one-third of the blind read raised type with any degree of satisfaction or comfort. The 17 per cent who lose their sight after they reach the age of 60 as well as some who become blind somewhat earlier in life frequently do not have the patience, the determination to study braille with sufficient concentration to use it with any degree of facility. To many of the third who use it, it remains for many years a laborious method,making work out of what should be pleasure. It has therefore been used as a necessity as it will always continue to be used, but it has not brought to the great majority of the blind the enjoyment that comes from the printed page which gives its impressions clearly in rapid succession.

The Talking Book has been developed by the American Foundation for the Blind to serve as eyes,as far as reading is concerned. Short stories, full length books,both fiction and non-fiction, are available on a series of long-playing phonograph disc records, each of which may play for more than half an hour. An average book is published on a dozen or fifteen 12 inch discs. The Talking Book machine is in fact a powerful slow-turning phonograph which may be adjusted for speed and sound. It may be equipped with both loud speaker and ear phones to prevent disturbance to others and to make the record more audible to the deaf.

The New Jersey Commission has brought the Talking Book to the attention of the blind persons in the state. Interested groups in the communities all over the state are cooperating with the Commission in purchasing the producing machines to be loaned for indefinite periods to persons who are unable to purchase them.

The Junior Women's Clubs of New Jersey during the past year conducted a Talking Book Campaign through which 220 talking book reading machines were purchased and turned over to the State Commission for the Blind to be loaned by the Commission to needy blind persons. In addition to these machines, the Juniors have accumulated a special revolving fund enabling the blind to pay for the machines on the installment plan and providing that payments returned to the Juniors be used for additional machines. Local service, fraternal, church, and women's organizations, chambers of commerce and public spirited citizens cooperated actively in the campaign.

The Commission itself has bought some machines from its budget and has received contributions for others from individuals, clubs and organizations in the community. An appropriation of the Federal Government for the manufacture of the machines as a Works Progress Administration project has allotted 160 to the Commission as New Jersey's share.

STATISTICAL APPENDIX

Number of Visually Handicapped in Each County Registered with the Commission in 1934

County	Total on register	Total blind (including partially blind)	Totally blind *	Partially blind *	Borderline *
Total	2589	2131	1444	687	458
Atlantic	114	108	71	37	6
Bergen	146	108	69	39	38
Burlington	61	54	40	14	7
Camden	150	129	75	54	21
Cape May	30	28	18	10	2
Cumberland	62	49	31	18	13
Essex	475	388	261	127	87
Gloucester	53	46	29	17	7
Hudson	431	367	262	105	64
Hunterdon	31	26	17	9	5
Mercer	136	114	84	30	22
Middlesex	108	95	61	34	13
Monmouth	147	124	92	32	23
Morris	80	70	43	27	10
Ocean	28	23	14	9	5
Passaic	205	136	81	55	69
Salem	38	33	23	10	5
Somerset	46	42	33	9	4
Sussex	33	25	14	11	8
Union	177	133	102	31	44
Warren	38	33	24	9	5

*The totally blind are defined as those with no vision or with light perception only; the partially blind have less than 20/200 vision in the better eye when fitted with glasses; the borderline have 20/200 but not 20/70 vision.

Diagnosis of Blindness and Partial Blindness by Cause 1934

Diagnosis	Total	Diphtheria	Gonorrhea	Measles	Meningitis	Ophthalmia neonatorum	Scarlet fever	Septicemia	Smallpox	Syphilis	Trachoma	Tuberculosis	Typhoid fever	Inf. paralysis	Other infections specified	Infections not specified	Non-industrial injuries	Industrial injuries	Toxic poisoning	Neoplasms - brain tumors	Diabetes	Nephritis, other kidney diseases	Vascular diseases	Non. infec. diseases of central nerve system	Diseases disorders preg. & childbirth	Other systemic diseases	Congenital	Hereditary	Unknown
Total	2131	1	2	12	39	100	24	1	7	146	7	8	4	6	11	126	204	129	9	33	28	16	21	10	4	4	201	51	927
EYEBALL	(572)																												
Glaucoma	236	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	236
Refractive errors	(50)																												
Myopia	44	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	4	32
Other refractive errors (spec)	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Motor anomalies	(22)																												
Amblyopia ex anopsia	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	2
Other motor anomalies (spec.)	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	9	-	1
Dev. anomalies & degen. changes	(264)																												
Albinism	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Anophthalmos	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-
Megalophthalmos	24	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-
Microphthalmos	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Disorganized globe	169	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	1	100	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4
Panophthalmitis	49	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	23	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	5
Other dev. anomalies & deg. changes	7	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	1
Affec. of eyeball (specified)	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CONJUNCTIVA	(7)																												
Conjunctivitis	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Affec. of conjunctiva (not spec)	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CORNEA	(215)																												
Interstitial keratitis	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Keratitis not specified	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	9	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Ulcers	144	-	-	3	-	99	-	-	-	12	3	-	-	-	-	10	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	12
Other affec. of cornea (spec.)	29	-	-	2	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	3	-	8
Affec. of cornea (not specified)	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1

IRIS AND CILIARY BODY.....	(75)																												
Iridocyclitis.....	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	1	8	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Iritis.....	51	-	2	3	-	-	6	-	1	11	1	1	1	-	-	20	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
Other affec. of iris (spec.)	5	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
CRYSTALLINE LENS.....	(390)																												
Cataracts.....	386	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	1	-	-	-	3	-	5	9	-	-	13	1	3	-	-	-	77	-	267
Dislocated lens.....	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other affec. of crystalline lens	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
CHOROID AND RETINA.....	(234)																												
Choroiditis.....	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	-	17	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Retinitis.....	30	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	4	-	1	-	-	11	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Uveitis.....	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	6	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Dissem. chorioretinitis.....	43	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	1	20	-	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	8	-	1
Detached retina.....	52	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	22	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	12
Retinal hemorrhage.....	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Retinitis pigmentosa.....	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	20	28	2
Obstruction of central artery...	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other affec. of choroid & retina.	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	1
Affec. of choroid & retina (not specified)	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OPTIC NERVE.....	(426)																												
Optic atrophy.....	396	-	-	1	34	-	4	1	-	79	-	1	-	4	1	6	20	15	5	29	1	4	16	5	2	2	7	5	154
Optic neuritis.....	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
Neuroretinitis.....	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	.
Other affec. optic nerve (spec.)	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
Affec. optic nerve (not spec.)..	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	2	-
VITREOUS HUMOR.....	(18)																												
Intraocular hemmorrhage.....	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	5
Opacities.....	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Other affec. vitreous humor (spec.)	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
MISCELLANEOUS AND ILL-DEFINED...	(194)																												
Amblyopia, undefined.....	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Lesions (specified).....	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lesions (not specified).....	191	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	3	-	11	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	5	4	159

Sex and Color of Blind Persons in Each County On the Register of the Commission, 1934

County	Total			White			Negro			Per cent Negro in county population
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	
Total	2131	1182	949	1867	1035	832	264	147	117	5.2
Atlantic	108	51	57	62	24	38	46	27	19	15.8
Bergen	108	71	37	106	70	36	2	1	1	2.4
Burlington	54	22	32	48	17	31	6	5	1	7.2
Camden	129	67	62	112	56	56	17	11	6	6.7
Cape May	28	18	10	21	12	9	7	6	1	9.4
Cumberland	49	19	30	41	17	24	8	2	6	6.8
Essex (except Newark)	145	83	62	123	70	53	22	13	9	7.2*
Newark	243	140	103	187	111	76	56	29	27	
Gloucester	46	25	21	37	19	18	9	6	3	8.6
Hudson (except J.C.)	133	81	52	130	79	51	3	2	1	2.3*
Jersey City	234	120	114	213	111	102	21	9	12	
Hunterdon	26	20	6	26	20	6	-	-	-	1.2
Mercer	114	70	44	103	62	41	11	8	3	6.4
Middlesex	95	54	41	91	52	39	4	2	2	2.8
Monmouth	124	58	66	105	52	53	19	6	13	9.4
Morris	70	38	32	69	37	32	1	1	-	3.0
Ocean	23	16	7	23	16	7	-	-	-	3.8
Passaic (except Paterson)	57	35	22	55	33	22	2	2	-	1.8*
Paterson	79	51	28	75	48	27	4	3	1	
Salem	33	14	19	25	11	14	8	3	5	12.9
Somerset	42	25	17	40	23	17	2	2	-	2.5
Sussex	25	15	10	25	15	10	-	-	-	0.4
Union	133	71	62	117	62	55	16	9	7	5.9
Warren	33	18	15	33	18	15	-	-	-	0.6

*Includes entire county

Disposition of Applications for Blind Relief Fiscal Year 1935

	Number applications
Number of applications pending June 30, 1934	43
Applications received during year	147
Number disposed of during year - total	150
Granted relief by Courts	94
Relief denied by Courts	1
Relief denied by Board (not taken before Court)	45
Applications withdrawn	7
Applicants deceased	3
Number applications pending end of year	40

Movement of Relief Cases Fiscal Year 1935

	Number receiving relief
Number of persons receiving relief on June 30, 1934	372
Number new recipients during year	92
Total receiving aid during year	464
Number persons discharged from relief during year	43
Deceased	30
Committed to institutions	2
Transferred to Old Age Relief	3
Discontinued for other reasons	8
Recipients as of June 30, 1935	421

Amount of Monthly Grant of All Persons Receiving Aid during 1935

	Persons receiving specified amount	
	Number	Per cent
Total	464	100.0
$ 5.00 to $ 9.99	1	0.2
$10.00 to $14.99	18	3.9
$15.00 to $19.99	108	23.3
$20.00 to $24.99	108	23.3
$25.00 to $29.99	183	39.4
$30.00 to $34.99	35	7.5
$35.00 to $39.99	7	1.5
$40.00	4	0.9